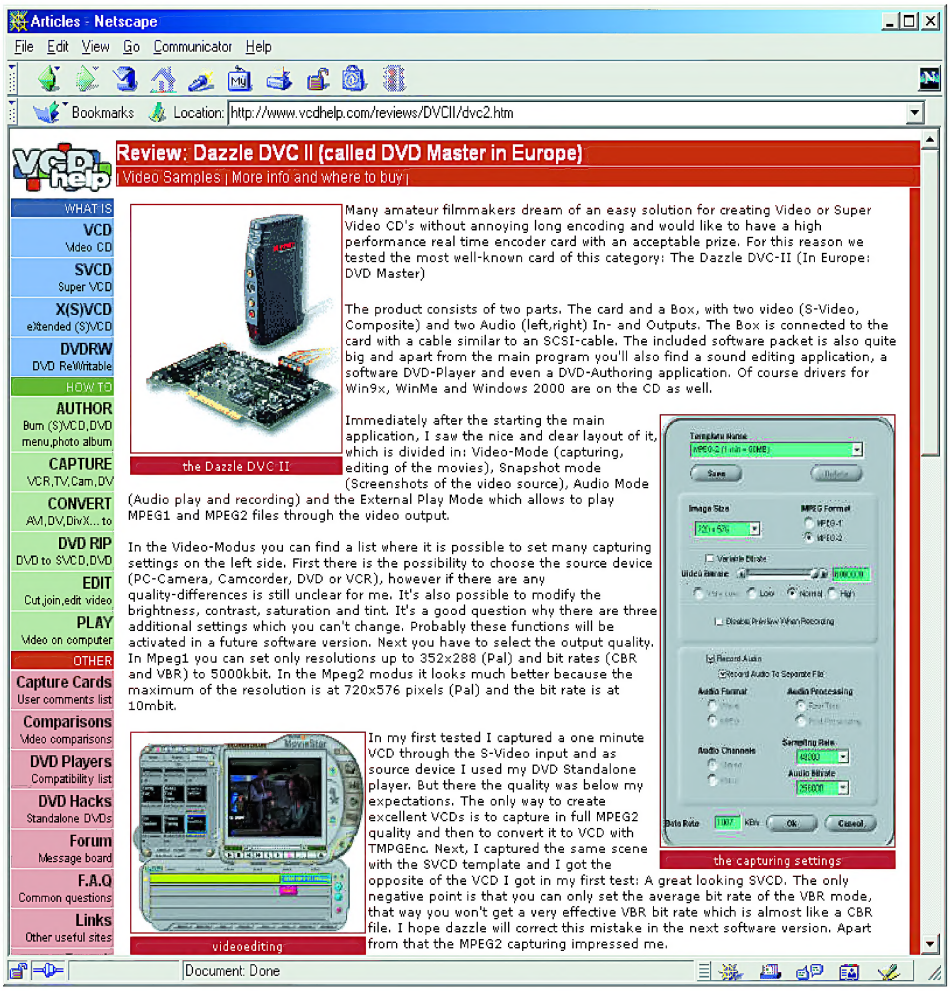
Digitising Video Imagery

everything together on a single site

By Harry Baggen

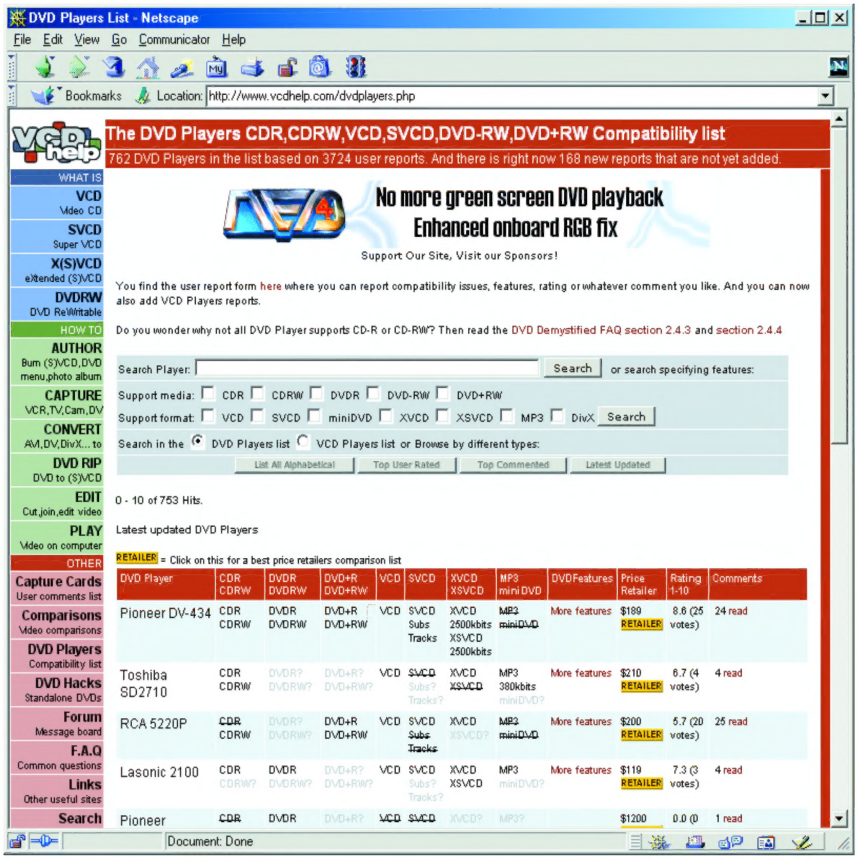
Making your own video CDs is a popular subject among computer users. Regardless of whether you're dealing with your own recordings or converting videotapes or DVDs to CD format, a considerable amount of expertise and software is always necessary to achieve good results.



Digitising video recordings and converting digital imagery from one medium to another are currently very popular, partly due to the fact that these days (almost) everyone has a fast computer and a CD burner. But even with a super-fast computer, digitising analogue video imagery or converting one format to another one can take hours or even days, so you can hardly consider it to be truly fast. On top of this, there are so many different formats that you need a fairly hefty collection of programs to obtain the proper result, not to mention all the settings, which can sometimes be difficult to understand.

The Internet is flooded with sites dealing with this issue, and computer magazines regularly dedicate long articles to the subject. That is not what we want to do here; instead, this time we limit ourselves to a single site that actually provides everything that a novice or experienced image manipulator needs: VCDHelp.com.

As the name suggests, this site provides information and help, in the broadest sense of the words, for making video CDs. There are sepa-



rate sections for video CD (VCD), Super Video CD (SVCD), eXtended Video CD (XVCD) and DVD RW. Detailed manuals provide step-by-step instructions for making a VCD, SVCD or SCVD from a video recording and identify the necessary programs. The conversion of a DVD to a to a VCD, SVCD or XVCD is also dealt with in detail (we naturally assume that your are making a copy for your own use, as is legally allowed).

We have already mentioned that the digitising and conversion of video recordings is extremely compute-intensive. A very handy feature is the comparative tables that list the quality and conversion speed of the best-known conversion programs, for instance from AVI to MPEG1 or MPEG2.

There list of programs for video editing is very long. VCDHelp does not deal with all of them, but the most important programs are described and there are links to sites where they can be found.

There is even more to be found on this site. For example, if you are in the market for a video capture card, you will find a summary of a number of cards with their most important features. There are even test reports for a number of cards!

There is also a compatibility list of stand-alone DVD players, which indicates which ones are suitable for playing back various types of video CDs.

In addition, there is an overview of modification possibilities for DVD players to make them suitable for playing back more than one region code.

Fans can make use of a forum and an extensive FAQ section to exchange information or search for information on particular subjects.

Perhaps you're not particularly interest in all of this? Then you should at least read the latest news on the home page in order to keep abreast of what's happening in the (digital) video area.

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Internet address:

www.vcdhelp.com